

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Katharine Hagemann Akutagawa

"I went to the mountain to do my laundry because it seems like the stream was running all the time at 'Ualapu'e. I had a special stick to whack my clothes. I used to wash it on the rock, but I used to have a special stick that I was hiding on the side. I loved to go up to the mountain to wash my clothes. We used brown soap, and the water was running all the time. Then I used to dry my clothes on the branches on the side, and maybe take my cracker and condensed milk, mixed it up with the stream water and drink it up there."

Katharine "Kitty" Akutagawa was born April 10, 1920 in Kaunakakai, Moloka'i. She was one of four daughters of Richard Ernest Hagemann, a German, and Grace Kaawakauo Hagemann, a Hawaiian. Richard Ernest Hagemann, the wireless operator of Moloka'i, also was manager of Kaunakakai Wharf.

When Kitty was seven, her family moved from Kaunakakai to 'Ualapu'e. She attended Ho'olehua School until the ninth grade, then moved to Honolulu and attended Farrington High School. After graduating from Farrington in 1939, Kitty worked at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard during World War II.

In 1946, she returned to Moloka'i and married William Masao Akutagawa, Sr. that same year. She began working as a clerk at the 'Ualapu'e Dispensary (formerly 'Ualapu'e County Hospital) and remained there until 1953.

Kitty still resides in 'Ualapu'e, right next to the 'Ualapu'e Fishpond. She and William Sr., who died in 1990, raised four sons.

Tape No. 19-20-1-90

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Katharine Hagemann Akutagawa (KA)

July 18, 1990

Kaunakakai, Moloka'i

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Katharine Akutagawa on July 18, 1990 in Kaunakakai, Moloka'i. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay, Auntie Kitty. Let's start. Why don't you tell me first, when you were born and where you were born?

KA: I was born in Kaunakakai, Moloka'i, April 10, 1920.

WN: And tell me something about your father.

KA: My father came from Berlin, Germany in—I'm only guessing—I think it's 1898. His first wife came from Kaua'i. He was a wireless operator in Kapa'a, Kaua'i. And he had two children. The first child he had was a daughter in 1899. His second child was a son, and he was born in 1900. He lives in Honolulu, and October 15, this year, he will be ninety years old. And my [half] brother has two children. The youngest passed away about four years ago. His daughter Roberta lives with him.

WN: What is his name?

KA: Robert Hagemann.

WN: Now, this is, let's see. . . .

KA: From the first marriage.

WN: So, Robert Hagemann is . . .

KA: A half brother.

WN: Your half brother. Oh. He's ninety years old?

KA: Ninety years old, October 15, of this year.

WN: I see. And what was your father's name?

KA: Richard . . .

WN: Richard.

KA: . . . Ernest . . .

WN: Ernest.

KA: . . . Hagemann.

WN: And when did he come to Moloka'i?

KA: I believe he came to Moloka'i in 1914. And my mother [Grace Kaawakauo Hagemann] is pure Hawaiian. They had four children. Anna, Leone, Kitty, and Anita.

WN: The second one was Leone?

KA: Second one, Leone.

WN: Okay. Did he ever tell you why he came to Moloka'i?

KA: He came to Moloka'i because he was transferred here. He was a wireless operator. And he was going from different islands. I know that he was in Honolulu. I don't know what year. And I know he was in Maui—Lahaina, Maui—and that's where Anna was born, at Nāpili in 1915.

WN: And so you're number three?

KA: Number three, with the second marriage.

WN: I see. Right, okay. And you told me that he was once the wharf manager at Kaunakakai [Wharf].

KA: Well, I don't know what year was that. But maybe [while] working for the wireless station, he was a wharf manager. Because he was selling gas on the side, you know, and he was a wireless operator in the meantime.

WN: I see. And what about your mother?

KA: Let's see. My father passed away in 1928. And so, after my father passed away, he left a small insurance, but we could get along with the insurance money that he left for her. But she went to work at 'Ualapu'e [County] Hospital as a nurse's aide.

WN: This is after your father died?

KA: Yes.

WN: I see.

KA: And she worked for the hospital from, let's see, I'd say in 1929. Because my father died on December 4, 1928. So she must have started in 1929. And she worked up until—what year now? And the hospital was closed. And it was changed into the Kilohana School [in 1935]. And, let's see, now. I think she retired in 1958.

WN: So the hospital was there following . . .

KA: The hospital was not there all the time. They had closed the [larger] hospital, and then the doctor's home was turned into [a smaller] hospital. I forgot what year the patients were taken to Shingle [Memorial] Hospital which was at Ho'olehua. My sister Anita's oldest girl, Marlene, and Phyllis was born at the—they called the hospital 'Ualapu'e [County] Hospital. So the hospital, maybe it was closed in 1946. I believe it was closed in 1946.

WN: And you worked there, too, right?

KA: Oh, yes. I worked there, too.

WN: When did you work there?

KA: I started to work in 1946. Because I couldn't find a babysitter, so my last employment was in 1953.

WN: So the hospital was there.

KA: No, it had changed into a dispensary. [The building which was 'Ualapu'e Hospital became Kilohana School in 1935. The doctor's home was then turned into a smaller hospital. In 1946, the smaller hospital became a dispensary, and closed down in the 1950s.]

WN: Oh, oh. I see. I see. Okay.

KA: But I went back to work off and on, you know, when Anna [Duvauchelle] Goodhue took my place. So when she went on a vacation, I took her place maybe for about three weeks every year. And then I didn't go back to work again because the dispensary was closed.

WN: I see. Okay. Now, you grew up or were born in Kaunakakai?

KA: Yes.

WN: And you spent your early childhood in Kaunakakai?

KA: Oh, yes. I stayed in Kaunakakai for seven years.

WN: What was it like, growing up over here?

KA: Oh, it was a country place, no electricity. I believe electricity came in Kaunakakai in the 1930s. What year it was, I can't recall. But when I was staying up the other side, when we

used to come down to Kaunakakai, the roads was rough those days. And then when we came to Kaunakakai, there was kerosene lamps all over the place.

WN: Where was your house?

KA: Right at the entrance of the [Kaunakakai] Wharf.

WN: So do you remember what things you used to do as a child in Kaunakakai?

KA: Well, I used to play with all the neighbors' children, and there were only White people where I lived. My mother was the only Hawaiian. Although, we had another lady. She was half Hawaiian. But my mother was not allowed to go on the beach because she was brown-skinned.

WN: Really?

KA: The manager of the Moloka'i Ranch didn't like the idea of my mother walking on the beach because she was Hawaiian.

WN: So, these White people that lived in the area, what did they do?

KA: Mr. [George] Wills was working for Moloka'i Ranch as a mechanic. He was the one that had bought a generator, electric generator, and he was the first one on Moloka'i that ran that electric generator. And this is what he used to say: "Don't iron your clothes," because if you do iron your clothes, the electricity would go off. It just can feed so many people around Kaunakakai and that's about it (chuckles).

WN: So your friends were all *Haole*?

KA: All *Haoles*. Yeah. Up until we moved to Kilohana [i.e., 'Ualapu'e], the whole neighborhood was *Haoles*. The only lady that I knew that had Hawaiian blood was Mrs. [Bernice] Wills. And her husband had started the first electric company for Moloka'i. She had Hawaiian blood, but it didn't show because her eyes (were) green. She looked all *Haole*. She had blonde hair. But I know that she had some brothers. In fact, when I was working at Pearl Harbor, she had a sister that looked all Hawaiian, but she looked exactly like Bernice.

WN: (Chuckles) So was she allowed to go on the beach?

KA: Oh, yes, because she was White.

WN: So how did your mother feel about this?

KA: Well, my father didn't like the idea, but what can we do?

WN: Did they ever tell you how they met and how they got married?

KA: Well, my father loved Hawaiian people. And all the Germans that came, I believe, in that year, most of them had married Hawaiians. That's why we have lots of German-Hawaiian

people on all islands. And we know, more or less, the names because my father was the one they contact. Any time they wanted a job, well, they got a hold of a German. And that's how Mr. Wills got here. Now, when he first got here, he knew my father was German because he was half German and half Irish. So he asked my father if he can get him a job. And so my father went to Moloka'i Ranch and asked them if they can hire a mechanic because that's what he took up in the army. So they hired him right away. So today, we are great friends with the whole family (chuckles). Like one big 'ohana.

WN: And your mother is from here, this island?

KA: My mother is from here. She was born in Mapulehu.

WN: I see. And when you folks moved after seven years—when you were seven years old—to Kilohana [i.e., 'Ualapu'e] . . .

KA: (Yes), Kilohana.

WN: Why did you folks move?

KA: Well, because my father was sick and he was in no position to take over the wireless station. He had a heart problem, so he knew that he was not able to take care of the wireless station. So he resigned.

WN: And then how did you end up going to that ['Ualapu'e] area?

KA: My father bought this property in 1921. So my father built a house.

WN: And he died a year after you folks moved?

KA: Yeah. He died in 1928. He died in his sleep. He had a heart problem. He knew that because—in 1925, he went to visit his parents for the last time. And the doctor told him, in Germany, that his heart is very bad. And so, when he came back, he knew that he was not able to go on. He did pass away in 1928.

WN: And how did you feel as a seven-year-old girl moving from Kaunakakai and the wharf area to 'Ualapu'e?

KA: Well, I liked that ['Ualapu'e] area because all the children were Hawaiian. And of course, my skin was brown, you know. I took after my mother. And so I liked that area. Anita and Leone were the only ones with the second marriage that had fair skin. Anna and myself were dark.

(Laughter)

KA: So, (it) was great playing with the Hawaiian children.

WN: I was wondering, when you were playing with the—growing up with the *Haole* children, were you teased at all for being Hawaiian?

- KA: No, not at all. Not at all. They never bothered about my skin. Never. They thought because maybe I went swimming a lot, you know, because we lived right near the beach. And so, that's why my skin was brown. But no, it was my mother's complexion.
- WN: So if you were to compare your home in Kaunakakai to your home in 'Ualapu'e, how would you compare it?
- KA: I like 'Ualapu'e better because Kaunakakai is a hot town, something like Lahaina [Maui]. And always, when I come down to Kaunakakai, I want to go home right away because it's so much different from Kaunakakai. Kaunakakai is—I call it hot hole.
- WN: Hot hole.
- KA: A hot hole (chuckles).
- WN: Was your house any bigger?
- KA: In Kaunakakai it was bigger. But the old-fashioned homes, in those days, never had a closet. We never hung up our clothes. And if we did hang up our clothes, we put it in the back of the door on the hook. And when we ironed our clothes, it was all put away in the trunk. And in the same way like, 'Ualapu'e, we iron our clothes with the charcoal iron. And everything was put away in the trunk. The homes, those days, were built different, compared to today. The bedrooms were all big. They had big bedrooms, big dining room, big veranda, big parlors.
- WN: So your house was big like that, too?
- KA: Down Kaunakakai. (Yes.)
- WN: And in 'Ualapu'e, where you're living in now, was that the house that you folks moved in?
- KA: The green house. That's where we lived.
- WN: So, as you were growing up in that ['Ualapu'e] house, what were some of your chores? Well, you didn't have a father.
- KA: When I came back from school, I had to go out and gather the wood for the wood stove. Everybody had a wood stove. And everybody had a garden. And we had no refrigerator, we used to salt everything. Salt meat, salt, salt, salt 'cause no refrigerator. I don't know how we survived those days. Come to think of it, that's why so many people had high blood pressure because they ate, everything was salt. And when we cooked our salt meat, we have to soak it and then boil it and discard the water until it came down to no salt. And then when we put vegetables in, everything was salt, salt, salt. And then we went out to get fish, there was plenty fish. Because no refrigerator, we just used to fish for that day. And if we caught more than our supply, we have to salt it. And so everything was salt, salt, salt. And so, well, maybe during our days, because so many of us ate salted food, that's why we have high blood pressure today (chuckles).

WN: How did you get your beef?

KA: We got it from Kaunakakai, or else, people went hunting around our area. Then they gave us, maybe deer meat. Well, we have to salt it. Or else dry it up and add salt. But we ate a lot of fish.

WN: And you said you had a garden. What was in the garden?

KA: I had tomatoes, carrots, head cabbage, and mustard cabbage, and white stem cabbage, onions. Let's see, what else? All the vegetables you can think of. We had chickens, and so we ate a lot of eggs.

WN: Did you have pigs?

KA: Yes, we had a pig and we had ducks. And so we had all the food. And I remember my mother, when she was working for the hospital, she was getting only twenty-five dollars a month. So when we went to the store, she said, "Don't go over twenty-five."

(Laughter)

KA: "Stay below that mark." So our bill was very little, because a can of sardines was only five cents. But we're not going to buy sardine because we have all the food around us. So we lived very cheap.

WN: And you went to Ah Ping Store?

KA: Ah Ping Store.

WN: Okay. And what school did you go to?

KA: I went to Kalua'aha School and Moloka'i Intermediate School.

WN: What was Kalua'aha School like?

KA: Oh. . . .

WN: Was it one-room schoolhouse?

KA: No, it went up to the eighth grade. We had no kindergarten, those days. Maybe first and second grade in one class, third and fourth in one class, and fifth and sixth in one class. And seventh and eighth in one class. That's five. And the teachers were very good. Compared to today, we were well disciplined. And if we went home and told our mother that we were spanked, I didn't dare tell my mother because she would spank me again.

WN: The teacher was always right (chuckles).

KA: Oh, teacher is always right. So I never did tell my mother if I got a spanking. And I think we learned more, those days, than today.

WN: Were the teachers from the island or were they from the Mainland?

KA: They were mostly from the island. And we were taught well.

WN: What was your favorite subject?

KA: Well, I liked arithmetic. That was my favorite subject.

WN: How far away was Kalua'aha School from your house?

KA: Where Kalua'aha [Estate] housing is [today]. I believe that's, maybe, a half a mile. It could be one mile from my place. So I walked to school. And we were very poor, so, if we had shoes, well, we were rich.

(Laughter)

KA: But if we had extra money, we would buy shoes. But the children in Kalua'aha School thought we were rich. You know why? Because I brought biscuits to school. For their lunch, they had sweet potato. So they say, "Let's exchange lunch." I had butter and jelly on my biscuits. So I exchanged their sweet potato with my biscuits.

WN: The kids in your school were mostly Hawaiian?

KA: We had lots of Japanese in school, and some Filipinos. And mostly half Whites. If they were *Haoles*, they had Hawaiian blood. So we got along fine. If a *Haole* came to school, well, we would look at them like they came from a different planet.

(Laughter)

WN: What about church? What were the churches around there?

KA: Well, there was a Catholic church that we went to. Then after we got through with the Catholic church, well, we went over to the Hawaiian church. And I went there mainly to have lunch. (Laughs) Because they served good food. They had, maybe, salt salmon, you know, without the ice. We had no ice those days. And every Sunday, they had good food, maybe pig, pork, mixed with the head cabbage. So I liked going there. And they had different food, too. And so every Sunday, when I went to my Catholic church, after the Catholic church was over, I went over to the Hawaiian church.

WN: And where was the Catholic church?

KA: Kalua'aha. Where Our Lady of Sorrows is today.

WN: Across from that Nī'aupala Fishpond?

KA: Yes, that's right.

WN: I see. And that was your church?

KA: That was my church.

WN: And where was the Hawaiian church?

KA: Right down below.

WN: Oh, it's still there?

KA: It's still there, but it's in a bad shape. It's going down now.

WN: Oh, is that what they call Kalua'aha Church?

KA: (Yes), Kalua'aha Church.

WN: Oh. That was Protestant?

KA: Oh, yes.

WN: Oh, okay. So that was Rev. [Isaac] Iaea?

KA: No, I think it was Rev. Joe Welch.

WN: Joe Welch. Any other churches you remember around there?

KA: No, that's all the churches.

WN: So they either went to the Catholic church or the Protestant church?

KA: I went to the Catholic church first. That was my church. After that, to the Hawaiian [Protestant] church to eat. (Chuckles) I wasn't interested in the service. I was just interested in having my lunch there.

WN: You said that one of your chores was gathering the wood for the wood [stove]?

KA: Yes.

WN: What else did you do? Well, there were four—there was your mother and four girls, yeah?

KA: But the two oldest went to Honolulu. They stayed here for a little while. After that, they went to stay with my Uncle Elias [Kaawakauo] in Waikīkī. He wanted them to come there to stay with them, thinking that my mother had a hard time supporting us. So, my two oldest sisters went there to stay with my uncle.

WN: I see. So there were two of you and your mom.

KA: Two and my mom.

WN: So you probably had a lot of work to do.

KA: Oh, yes. I had lots of work to do. In the beginning, my mother was afraid of us staying home alone and we used to go to the neighbors' to stay. And I said to Anita, "I don't want to go to the neighbors. I want to stay home." And so I made every effort to stay at home because I wasn't afraid. So I was just like a mother to Anita.

WN: How many years apart were you?

KA: A year and eight months.

WN: Oh, close.

KA: Yeah.

WN: (Chuckles) So you—did you do cooking at all?

KA: Oh, yes. I cooked food different ways, you know, just (used my) imagination. So Anita used to say, "You're a great cook because whatever you cooked was good." So I put all kinds of seasoning, but I didn't tell her. Pepper. (Chuckles) What I seen on the shelf, well, I used all kinds of seasonings. And maybe if I cooked a can of corned beef, I didn't cook it one way. I cooked it four different ways, you know, different times. She said, "I don't know what I'm going to eat." (Chuckles) "Kitty is the cook."

WN: I see. As a young girl growing up in 'Ualapu'e, what did you do to have fun?

KA: Let's see. We went swimming. What else we would do? And maybe we gathered *maunaloa* seeds. We made our own games. And we played marbles. After I did what I was supposed to do for the day, I always went down five miles away from our place to the McCorristons' home, and maybe we stayed down there for weekends. I was more or less brought up with the McCorriston family because we had everything in 'Ualapu'e. We had the courthouse there, and Judge [Edward] McCorriston was the judge. And the tax office was there. The jailhouse was there. So Judge McCorriston's children came up every day. So they were my playmates.

WN: The tax office and courthouse served the whole island?

KA: Served the whole island. It was moved down here [Kaunakakai] in 1935. That's the same courthouse [building] now, over there.

WN: Oh, they moved the buildings over?

KA: They moved the buildings down here. (WN chuckles.) I don't know when we're going to get a new courthouse (chuckles). Maybe they should leave it like this, instead of making a new building, but just paint the courthouse. Do something like Lahaina. How Lahaina looks like today. You see there, lots of old buildings and, well, it looks nice.

WN: You don't want it to be crowded like Lahaina, though.

KA: Yeah.

(Laughter)

WN: What kind of holidays did you folks celebrate around there?

KA: I remember we celebrated Kamehameha Day. That was a big celebration, and we went to Ho'olehua. All the old folks used to wear *holokū*s. My mother belonged to the Ka'ahumanu [Society], so I remember my mother had a feather lei. All the *holokū*s were black. They used to have a big march in Ho'olehua where Ho'olehua School is today.

WN: And what did you wear?

KA: Well, I was little girl so, I don't know what I, you know . . .

(Laughter)

KA: . . . wear, see. Maybe ordinary school clothes.

WN: You didn't get dressed up?

KA: No, no, no. Not at all. And how do we get to Ho'olehua, I don't remember. Maybe we rode on a Model-T or we hopped on with the people that's going to Ho'olehua.

WN: Did you folks have a Model-T?

KA: No. It's the people around the neighborhood. So, if there was enough room, well, we climbed on. (Chuckles) We couldn't afford a car. But during those days, you just can count how many cars there was on Moloka'i. And when there was a car that was passing by, they say, oh, number one, or number two today. (Chuckles)

WN: How long did it take you to get from there to here?

KA: To Kaunakakai?

WN: Yeah.

KA: Maybe forty-five minutes. I kind of forget, but I think about forty-five minutes. Could be more than that.

WN: So I guess it was a big trip to come here.

KA: Oh, yes. When I used to get on the car from 'Ualapu'e to Kaunakakai, what I used to do, count the telephone poles. And I say, well, so many telephone poles, and then we'll get to Kaunakakai. But I remember my mother had a Model-T. After my father passed away, she learned how to drive. I was coming down Kaunakakai with my mother one day, and there was a horse that ran across the street. And my mother hit the horse. She said, "Don't you tell nobody that I hit a horse."

(Laughter)

KA: And it flattened the tire.

WN: Oh.

KA: So, (laughs) my mother didn't know how to fix the tire. So just by Kapa'akea, we got off the car and walked to Kaunakakai because we had a flat. I can't remember how we got home.

WN: How wide was the road?

KA: Very narrow.

WN: Just enough for one car?

KA: Maybe two cars. But maybe if we came across a section where the road was too narrow, then we have to wait. And they had all curves, you know, those days. And the road was rocky, lot of bumps in the road. I don't think they had county employees to fix the road up because there were a lot of holes.

WN: I was wondering, talking about Ah Ping Store, did they deliver at all or did you folks have to go there?

KA: Sometimes. Sometimes, they delivered. Maybe if we had a bag of feed, scratch feed, then they delivered the feed because we had no way of bringing home the feed. The big items, they used to deliver.

WN: Did Ah Hong deliver?

KA: Yes. Ah Hong did.

WN: How did you folks do your laundry?

KA: I went to the mountain to do my laundry because it seems like the stream was running all the time at 'Ualapu'e. I had a special stick to whack my clothes. I used to wash it on the rock, but I used to have a special stick that I was hiding on the side. I loved to go up to the mountain to wash my clothes. We used brown soap, and the water was running all the time. Then I used to dry my clothes on the branches on the side, and maybe take my cracker and condensed milk, mixed it up with the stream water and drink it up there.

WN: (Chuckles) Were you the only family to use that part of the stream?

KA: No, there were other families, too, big families. We all used to take our food up there. We had a great time.

WN: How far a walk was it from your house?

KA: Wasn't too far, was right in the back of the 'Ualapu'e Dispensary. And I don't know why the water kept running, you know. Maybe the rain. So the water was running, so we went up there to wash our clothes. If we didn't wash our clothes up there, then we have to pack the

water. There was only one faucet in the school park. We have to pack buckets of water to put it in the galvanized tub. Then we'd wash our clothes at home. That was too hard for me. So I preferred going up to the mountain and wash my clothes.

WN: And then you would iron at home?

KA: I would iron at home.

WN: Oh, that's rough.

KA: That was a nice life. Sometime I like to go back and repeat my life over again. (Chuckles)
And do it . . .

WN: The stream, the place where you washed, is it still there?

KA: I don't think so. The stream bed had changed.

WN: That 'Ualapu'e Pond, what did you folks call it? Was there a name for it?

KA: We called it 'Ualapu'e Pond.

WN: 'Ualapu'e Pond. Because I was noticing like they have the Jones [NT'aupala] Pond, the Hitchcock [Ka'opeaHina] Pond, you know, they go by the owners of the pond. But was there any—there was no name for 'Ualapu'e Pond?

KA: No. There was no name because it belongs to the state. But it was more or less leased by different people from the time I was there, I remember. The first person I remember that was leasing that pond was Anna Goodhue's father.

WN: Duvauchelle.

KA: [Edward] Duvauchelle.

WN: So do you remember him?

KA: Oh, yes. I remember him.

WN: And then after Duvauchelle?

KA: Duvauchelle, and then Harry Apo.

WN: Harry Apo. And then, do you remember anybody else?

KA: No, nobody else. Of course, after Harry Apo, and long time after that, then [George] Peabody took over.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: So do you remember when Duvauchelle was the caretaker or the lessor, I guess, you know, did you have to ask permission before you went?

KA: No, we were free to go in the pond. We didn't even have to ask permission. But we knew that, you know, we didn't take the fish. But they gave fish. They were easy people to get along with. And so we were free to go in the pond to gather whatever we wanted.

WN: And what did you gather in the pond?

KA: We gathered the *chop-chop limu*, clams, and 'ōpae. There's plenty 'ōpae in there. And we had some crab in there too, the *kūhonu*.

WN: *Kūhonu* crab?

KA: Yeah.

WN: Where did you catch the crab? By the [pond] wall?

KA: By the wall. There was plenty food in there.

WN: What about fish, like mullet? Did you folks go catch fish?

KA: No, we didn't catch fish. But if the Duvauchelles had fish, extra, they would give it to us. We had plenty fish outside of the pond. I used to go out of the pond with my *tūtū* and Anita. She had a twenty-five-foot net, so we just pull for one meal or two meals because we had no place to put the fish.

WN: So you folks would go on the other side of the . . .

KA: (Yes), the other side of the wall. So, it was easy. But the Duvauchelles gave us fish. They were kind.

WN: So you folks never went with your net inside the pond?

KA: No, no way, because the pond was leased.

WN: I see. So because it was private property, you respected that.

KA: Oh, yes. But they let us go and gather *limu* and 'ōpae in the pond and get the crab. But to pull our net, no, that's private.

WN: Was there any differences from the time Duvauchelle leased it and when Harry Apo leased it?

KA: When Harry Apo leased the pond, we were welcome to get the *limu* and the 'ōpae, and that's about it.

WN: What about the clams and the crab?

KA: And the crab. But not the clams. Then if we wanted fish, well, we buy it. When he went to the pond to get the fish, well, we have to buy it from him, for a dollar a pound.

WN: What about when he got the drag net. Did you folks help, and did they give you fish . . .

KA: No, not at all because he has some Japanese men that was helping him. So we never did help.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: Okay. So you did mostly—collect the *chop-chop limu* and the crabs, 'ōpae. You didn't go get clams.

KA: With Harry Apo.

WN: With Harry Apo. But with Duvauchelle you could?

KA: Oh, yes.

WN: So was Duvauchelle more lenient than Harry Apo?

KA: Oh, yes. Well, I think he [Apo] had no job, so he needed every cent. That's why he just wanted us to get maybe the crab and other stuff.

WN: And also, did Harry Apo live near the pond?

KA: Oh, yes. He lived right by the entrance of the school, Kilohana School. There was a nurse's cottage there. His wife was a nurse, so he lived right in that section.

WN: Is his wife still alive?

KA: I don't know. But I know she lived down Kāne'ohe [O'ahu]. If she's still alive, I don't know.

WN: Okay.

KA: When Billy [M. Akutagawa, KA's son] comes in here, we'll ask him for the telephone book for O'ahu.

WN: Okay. As you were growing up around the pond itself, were there mangroves there?

KA: No, no mangroves. Mangroves came up to Moloka'i in 1932, I believe.

WN: So was there any kind of plants in the pond itself?

KA: There was—I don't know what you call it—what you see way on the corner, that grass.

WN: Was it bulrush?

KA: I don't know what you call it. That's about it. We had no mangrove, and there was another one, too, that's all over the islands. I don't know what you call it. It has a little hairy like, white, it's a nuisance. And mangrove, I think, was introduced by Manu, was his last name. He was the fish and game warden over here (and worked for Moloka'i Ranch).

WN: Manu?

KA: M-A-N-U.

WN: Yeah, other people said it was—it might have been Mr. [James] Munro from New Zealand? No?

KA: No, I don't think so.

WN: Oh, yeah.

KA: And same like the *'ala'eke* crab, you know what I'm talking about. The blue crab. It was introduced by Manu, too. I might be wrong.

WN: What about the clams?

KA: Well, we had the clams (for a) long time. And they said because of the mud, that's why it had disappeared. But I really believe it's the *'ala'eke* crab that ate it all up.

WN: Do you remember how many *mākāhā*. . . .

KA: We had two *mākāhā* in that 'Ualapu'e Pond.

WN: Okay. And what were some of the—did your parents or did anybody tell you—were there any kind of *kapus* associated with the pond or things that you shouldn't do near the pond or anything like that?

KA: Yes. You wasn't supposed to go in the pond when a woman had her period. Because my second sister, she was walking on the pond [wall]. Was high tide, and the *kūpala* hit her in the back—I still remember that. Until today, I don't eat that fish. Because my sister came back and she had a big hole in her back. She got attacked by the *kūpala*. I know another person, too, that got attacked. That's the old lady, Kapuni, Julia Kapuni. She was attacked by the *kūpala*.

I'm not too sure, but they said there's a *mo'o* in that pond. The person to tell you about this is Marion Kalima. She's the one that has that lei booth up at the airport.

WN: Oh.

KA: Try talk to her.

WN: Is she from here?

KA: Oh, yes. Her last name is Briones, I think, B-R-I-O-N-E-S.

WN: B-R-I-O-N-E-S. Her maiden name is Kalima?

KA: (Yes).

WN: Oh. And they have the lei stand at the airport?

KA: (Yes), she has a lei stand.

WN: Oh, how old is she?

KA: She is, I say she could be in her sixties now.

WN: And then, how come she knows about the *mo'o*?

KA: Because I was talking to her the other day at the airport. So she was saying because there's a *mo'o* in that pond.

WN: Is she from 'Ualapu'e?

KA: Oh, yes (nearby). She's from Kalua'aha.

WN: Oh. Mmm. Okay. When you compare 'Ualapu'e with some of the other ponds, like Jones and Hitchcock, how would you compare 'Ualapu'e in terms of fish, productivity, or anything like that? Did you play in the other ponds? Did you play around the other ponds, too?

KA: No. I only know about 'Ualapu'e Pond. I don't know about Jones Pond and I don't know about the Hitchcock Pond. The Hitchcock's pond is Hustace Pond. I don't know much about the Hustace Pond. I only know about 'Ualapu'e Pond.

WN: So Hustace and Hitchcock is the same pond?

KA: Yeah, same.

WN: This is which one? This is the . . .

KA: The one right in front by the—next to the Catholic church, you know, the one in front of the [Our Lady of Sorrows] Catholic Church is Jones, and the next pond you see is Hustace Pond [Ka'opeaHina Fishpond].

WN: So Nī'aupala is Jones?

KA: I don't know what the name of (chuckles). . . .

WN: I always ask people and they get—everybody always get mixed up, you know, which one is

which. Yeah. No, Kūpeke is . . .

KA: Kūpeke is Buchanan's.

WN: Buchanan, okay. Kūpeke.

KA: See, 'Ualapu'e Pond, I was raised over there, so I know the pond. So I go in that pond. But the other ponds, I don't know. I might go outside of the pond, but going in the pond, I don't know anything about the pond.

WN: How often would Duvauchelle and Harry Apo drag the net into the pond?

KA: Gee, I don't know about the Duvauchelles. I haven't seen. I never did see the Duvauchelles. Always, when I was there, the pond was dragged already. And same like Harry Apo, when he had fish. When the *Kona* wind came, it seems the mullet went in the *mākāhā*. So they were trapped in there.

WN: Between the two gates? The *mākāhā*?

KA: Between the two gates.

WN: And that's how they caught the fish from inside there?

KA: Well, I used to go down there when the *Kona* wind. And I used to see Harry there with the Japanese caretaker. There was a house right near the pond on the—as you going down, it was on the right-hand side.

WN: Oh, that's where they stored all the nets and . . .

KA: Well, he had a—maybe so. But there was a Japanese man that was living down there.

WN: Oh, Sakanashi?

KA: Yeah, Sakanashi. Was very clean.

WN: How did they clean the pond?

KA: I have no idea. They never used to clean the pond.

WN: Maybe it just cleaned itself, huh?

KA: Yeah, maybe so. And to me, the pond wasn't muddy before, like now. Did the '*ala'eke* do that? I don't know. But I noticed in the latter part of the '40s, the pond was muddy. And all the [clam] shells were there. And I believe it's the '*ala'eke*, but they said no, it's the water that came down from the mountain.

WN: What is '*ala'eke*?

KA: 'Ala'eke is that blue crab.

WN: Oh.

KA: Way back, I never remembered seeing that crab in the pond. They said Manu had introduced that crab and the mangroves. And now, it's all over the island. I could be wrong, but I really believe the 'ala'eke did the damage.

WN: Well, you're one of the first to at least come up with some kind of reason for the clams [disappearing].

KA: You think so?

WN: Some people say it was some disease, or tidal wave, you know, that caused the clams to disappear.

KA: Because you go in the pond, you see all the shells cracked. And you know, the 'ala'eke has sharp teeth, because you try and stick your finger . . .

(Laughter)

WN: No, thank you.

(Laughter)

KA: I believe it's the *ala'eke*. Because when we didn't have that crab, we had lots of clams in the pond. And other people say, no, it's the mud that came down from the mountain. I don't know.

WN: I talked to other people, and they said they used to go clamming, you know.

KA: (Yes), I used to go clamming.

WN: Oh, so Harry Apo did let you folks go in for clams?

KA: (Yes), when I asked him. But you know, just so-so and yet he wanted to sell, you know. And because I was a good friend with his wife.

WN: What kind of a man was Harry Apo?

KA: He was all right. He was okay.

WN: Somebody told me there was a spring in that pond.

KA: Oh yes. All ponds have springs. All around there, we have spring, you know. If I know where the spring is?

WN: Well, one was the Lo'ipūnāwai, right?

KA: (Yes), that's right.

WN: Which I don't see anymore. (Chuckles)

KA: (Yes), I don't see anymore. Is it destroyed?

WN: But people were also saying that there was a freshwater source in the middle of the pond?

KA: Oh, I don't know.

WN: John Iaea was telling me that he remembers water bubbling up . . .

KA: Oh, could be.

WN: . . . from the middle of the pond, and that place right there got real deep. He couldn't touch the bottom.

KA: Oh, is that so?

WN: So he—I think 'cause the water was coming up.

KA: Oh, we have spring water all along there, you know. And where there is taro patch, there's a spring water. Because right outside of that pond, on the right-hand side, you step in the water, you can feel that cold. You know where that big house is, where Louis Blissard has his home?

WN: Mm hmm.

KA: There was a spring, but where's the spring now? I've been in that pond lately, because they told me there's *limu* in the front of that pond. But no, I don't find. I find only the rubbish *limu*. I stepped in that pond, maybe about two weeks ago, or three weeks ago.

WN: Which pond?

KA: 'Ualapu'e Pond.

WN: Oh, yeah.

KA: And I didn't feel any spring water.

WN: I hope the sources didn't all dry up.

KA: There's no spring.

WN: And you need fresh water, right?

KA: Oh, yes.

WN: For fish pond.

KA: Sure. So what happened to the spring? To me, they had no business building all those houses right there by the fish pond. The state should have thought about that.

WN: So before, didn't have any houses in front of the pond?

KA: You see, they did have houses over there, one house, the Kaauwais' house. But they had an outside *lua*. But this [new homes], you making a deep cesspool. That's a *pilikia*.

WN: I see. So where was the house?

KA: Where Blissard's '*ohana* house is. That's where that house was. At that spot. Because three weeks ago, I stepped in front of that Blissard's place. And then I went around the pond. And I didn't feel any spring water coming out, none whatsoever. Because that's where I used to go and get my '*ōpae*. Had '*ōpae* yet.

WN: Of course, no more '*ōpae* anymore, huh?

KA: No more. When they [i.e., a past lessee] changed the outside [i.e., wall] of the pond, they changed the shape of the rocks. You know, they pile different place so the '*ōpae* don't come home now. Had '*ōpae* in that section. And why they don't have '*ōpae* in front of that Blissard's house, I don't know. Is it because of the cesspool? You see, the Hawaiians, they don't like *kāpulu*. What we eat, well, have to be clean. And maybe the cesspool is there, and that waste is going in the pond, I don't know. When Isabella Kaauwai had that house, they had an outside *lua*, so naturally, the *lua* hole isn't too deep down. And well, the pond wasn't damaged, to me. And they had spring water. But now, I don't feel the spring water.

WN: How often do you go in?

KA: Well, as much as I can, in the water.

WN: And what do you do?

KA: Well, I went there purposely to get *limu* because Blissard told me that there's *limu* in front. But you know *Haole*, they don't know what's good *limu* and lousy *limu* (laughs). So Shinichi went with me, Shinichi Watanabe, you've met him.

WN: Yeah.

KA: Okay. And so I said, "No, that's *da kine limu*, I don't know how they ever ate that *limu*."

(Laughter)

WN: What kind *limu* was that?

KA: That's some, way out in the ocean, rubbish. I don't know the name of it. There's no name. There's no Hawaiian name for it. But they said, one time, they had told me, that's

māne'one'o. But the old-timers told me, "That's not how *māne'one'o* looks like." Because when you put it in your mouth, have a hard time going down your throat. It scratches your throat. I pick up *'ele'ele*, *chop-chop limu*, and *ogo*. That's about it.

WN: In the pond?

KA: The *ogo limu*, maybe outside of the pond. And then the *'ele'ele* on the right-hand side, outside of the pond. There's *'ele'ele* there. And then I pick up *ogo* from another place. And then the *limu kohu* way outside of Wavecrest [condominium, in Kamalō], that section. I go out there and get the *limu kohu*.

WN: What *limu* do the mullet eat, do you know?

KA: I don't know. The mullet, what kind *limu*? I'm trying to think of the other *limu*, brown [*līpoa*]. Do you know the names of the *limu*?

WN: Not too much.

KA: Not too much.

WN: John Iaea mentioned one. Let me try see if I can find it.

KA: I bet he said *huluhulu waena*. *Huluhulu waena* is the same like *chop-chop limu*.

WN: Yeah, what is *chop-chop*? What is the real name, do you know?

KA: *Pakeleawa'a*. But some other people gave me other names [*huluhulu waena*]. But that's the name my *tūtū* gave me. So, I always say *pakeleawa'a*.

WN: *Huluhulu waena*?

KA: Yeah, *huluhulu waena*, that's *chop-chop*.

WN: Oh, okay. That's the one that John Iaea told me, and then *'ele'ele*.

KA: I'm trying to think of the other brown *limu*. I just can't remember. [*Limu līpoa*.]

WN: What's the Hawaiian name for *ogo*?

KA: *Ogo* is *manauea*.

WN: *Manauea*?

KA: Mm hmm. The Japanese like that. It seems like that's the only *limu* they like.

WN: That's the only *limu* I used to eat. Japanese.

KA: Yeah? Japanese. Uh huh. Because Malia, I don't know if you know Myron's daughter, Malia.

She has a Japanese boyfriend. And all what he like is *ogo*. Yeah. And maybe *limu kohu* with raw fish, or 'ō'io, you know. I had made some last week for him, you know, chop it up with green onions and . . .

(Laughter)

KA: Billy's wife went out with me, pick *limu kohu*. I can't think of the other *limu* that I used to pick [*Itpoa*]. I don't see it now. And then the *manini* eat that *limu*. And out Kūhiō Beach, they had plenty of that *limu*.

WN: Kūhiō Beach?

KA: (Yes). Down Waikīkī.

WN: Down Waikīkī.

KA: Ho, that brown *limu*.

WN: That's the one that's in the brackish water a lot, yeah?

KA: No, the seawater. The *limu* is good if you have high blood pressure. If you eat too much, then the blood pressure drop. I can't think of the name [*Itpoa*].

WN: How did you prepare mullet? How did you eat mullet?

KA: I love steamed mullet. I steam it, and then after that, I sprinkle onions, round onions and green onions. Lots of onions. And then I warm up the olive oil, and then spread the olive oil over. And I add a little shoyu [*shōyu*]. That's it.

WN: I heard the mullet from the fish pond had lot of fat inside?

KA: (Yes).

WN: Must have been good.

KA: I love steamed fish.

WN: Did you folks eat mullet raw, too? A lot?

KA: Yes. Uh huh.

WN: So what other fish did you folks eat when you were growing up?

KA: I ate lots of *manini*. You *pālehu* the *manini* on the outside on the charcoal. Then after that, you boil hot water, add some salt, and dump the *manini* in. And eat it with poi or else with 'ulu poi, sweet potato. Lawa.

(Laughter)

WN: What about 'ō'io? Did you folks eat 'ō'io?

KA: Oh, yes.

WN: And how did you folks get the meat out?

KA: I just cut it in half. Then you look where all the bones are, and then I scrape it off with the spoon. See, if the bones is lying this way, like that. Depends, you know. And then you just scrap the meat off. I always save the head. The head, you can eat it, you know. There's no bone—well, there's bones in there, but not as bad as if you're going to cook the whole thing. Because 'ō'io has lots of bones. And the best way to prepare that is, you can make fish cake out of the meat. Or else, you can make raw fish, and chop onions inside, and *limu kohu*. Chop it up and then add a little salt and little chili pepper.

WN: By fish cake, you deep fry it?

KA: (Yes), deep fry. And add eggs and onions and pepper. If you love your chili pepper, you can add chili pepper in it.

WN: Was there a difference from the fish that was caught in the pond as opposed to the fish that was caught in the open ocean, in taste?

KA: To me, pond fish is more delicious than—the mullet, I'm talking about, in the pond—than the outside fish.

WN: Why is that?

KA: I don't know why. But it tastes better.

WN: More fat?

KA: More fat. I believe it's more expensive than the outside fish. That's just like getting mullet from Florida.

(Laughter)

KA: There's a difference with mullet from the pond and maybe mullet from Florida. To me, it [Florida mullet] don't have that island taste.

WN: Yeah, yeah.

KA: It has a flat taste.

WN: Yeah, well, the only mullet I've had before I came here [Moloka'i] was frozen kind. You know, frozen air-flown from . . .

KA: From Florida, maybe. It has a different taste. Just like the lobster from Africa and the lobster from Hawai'i. Maybe the frozen process, all the way from the foreign country, by the time it

gets here, well, there's no taste. Maybe it comes from the river. I don't know.

(Laughter)

WN: When do you remember the pond last being used? When Harry Apo died? Is that the last time it was used for commercial fishing?

KA: (Yes), I believe so, when Harry Apo died.

WN: Do you know when he died?

KA: Gee, when did Harry die? Could have been in the '60s? Because, you see, when he passed away, the wife lost the homestead because she doesn't have half Hawaiian blood, which is sad. After you planted all the fruit trees, you improved the place, to me, they should change the law. Anytime you marry outside of your nationality, and no matter how little Hawaiian blood, you're still entitled to the homestead. And anytime you have family, you know, especially your wife. She should have a life interest.

WN: Too bad.

KA: (Yes), too bad. Because, she's the type to plant lots of fruit trees. And she did have fruit trees in the yard. It's sad.

WN: Where did Harry Apo sell the fish?

KA: To me, he sold it when people know that you have a pond and when you're going to get the fish, they all come around. You know, the fish is sold in no time. Or else, you have orders for so many people. You put in an order, and then maybe he call up the people. "Oh, I have fish, you want fish?" Same like the Kūpeke Pond. Japanese people used to take care of the pond. And I used to buy fish from them. And so if I was going to Honolulu, I buy fish from the Yoshimuras.

WN: So you mean, Yoshimura . . .

KA: Yoshimura had leased the pond from the Buchanans.

WN: Oh, I see.

KA: So if I was going to Honolulu, I said, "Oh, Mrs. Yoshimura, I'm going to Honolulu so-and-so day. Can you supply me with twenty pounds?" Because fish, those days, was only dollar a pound.

WN: (Chuckles) You mean, you brought twenty pounds of fish to Honolulu?

KA: Twenty pounds, to Honolulu. (WN laughs.) Because I have family there.

WN: Hoo, boy.

KA: And that was a treat. It's either that or else Kanemitsu's bread. The people from the outside islands like the Kanemitsu bread.

WN: Yeah.

KA: So, either that or else fish. And fish from Yoshimura's pond was big.

WN: What, mullet?

KA: Mullet. Huge mullet. So I used to buy it for a dollar a pound. And that's very cheap, you know.

WN: How do you carry twenty pounds of fish to Honolulu?

KA: Oh, easy. Twenty pounds is nothing.

WN: (Laughs) What, in a cooler? Do you put it in a cooler?

KA: No, I froze it first. At that time, you had electricity and maybe I had a freezer, so I put it in the freezer. I can pack it in the cooler, you know. I do use cooler now. You know what I mean?

WN: Yeah.

KA: Malia had a friend from the college that she goes to. So he went over to visit one of the college students. So I have lots of mango in my place. And he went to Kamuela. So he packed the big cooler of mangoes this morning, and bananas, cooking bananas.

WN: Oh, wow.

KA: He's a colored guy. He's been at the house for one week. So I packed the mangoes in the cooler, and I say, as soon as he get to Kamuela, please open it up because I put no ice down below, and I packed the avocados, too. So he took it over with him. He went on Aloha [Island] Air, and then from Maui, he got on the Kamuela plane because no other flights go there except Aloha [Island] Air. I don't know where Kamuela (is). I think it's by Parker Ranch, I think.

WN: Yeah.

KA: So that's what he took this morning.

WN: (Chuckles) So Harry Apo never sold, never took fish on a boat to Maui or Honolulu?

KA: Oh, no, no, no. Wasn't necessary. Was something like when we have the shrimps over here, you know, the big 'ōpae. Everybody know they selling for five dollars a pound. So you see a long line. In no time, you know, on Moloka'i.

WN: Where would he be selling it?

- KA: Right there. He never had to go off and bring this fish to Kaunakakai. No way, because people would buy it.
- WN: What about *lo'i*? Was there *lo'i* around there? Taro?
- KA: Taro, oh yes. I remember that Julia had planted taro.
- WN: Julia . . .
- KA: Kapuni Sato. And then Dan Kaloi, where the Shoemakers have their place. He used to have a big taro patch over there. We never have to worry before. If we were out of taro, we just go to Mapulehu and get '*ulu*. And then the Kalois had a machine to grind the '*ulu*. So I learned how to eat '*ulu poi* from them. I have '*ulu* trees in my yard. So I grind my own '*ulu*.
- WN: Oh, yeah? Using what? What do you use to grind?
- KA: The electric grinder.
- WN: Oh, yeah?
- KA: Mm hmm. So I have '*ulu*.
- WN: The '*ulu poi* better than taro?
- KA: No. The same. But I'm the only one that eat '*ulu poi* because I'm the only one at home.
- WN: Did your boys eat '*ulu poi*?
- KA: Well, Billy eats anything. Then the oldest boy, he eats anything. He lives in Honolulu. He loves his Hawaiian food.
- WN: Okay, what I want to do is to stop here and then come back one more time, and then we talk about the rest of the things you did, you know, when you went Honolulu and . . .
- KA: When I went Honolulu?
- WN: Yeah, and then your working in the hospital and things like that. Today I wanted to talk mostly about 'Ualapu'e and the pond.
- KA: Oh, oh. I see.
- WN: Next time, we talk about your other history.
- KA: Well, I'm going to charge you hundred dollars. (Laughs)
- WN: Hundred dollars? Okay.
- KA: No, I'm just fooling you.

(Laughter)

WN: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 19-22-2-90

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Katharine Hagemann Akutagawa (KA)

October 11, 1990

'Ualapu'e, Moloka'i

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Katharine "Kitty" Akutagawa, on October 11, 1990 at her home in 'Ualapu'e, Moloka'i. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay, let's start. Okay, you know, we were talking about, after Harry Apo was the caretaker [of 'Ualapu'e Fishpond], were there caretakers after him? Do you remember?

KA: No, I don't remember. Can't remember.

WN: So, after Harry Apo died or left, there was no one to take care of the pond?

KA: Nobody.

WN: So then anybody could go in and do whatever.

KA: (Yes).

WN: Okay, I just wanted to ask you that question before we continued. Now in 1936, you left Moloka'i to go to Honolulu . . .

KA: Go to school, that's right.

WN: Why did you leave?

KA: I left to go to high school.

WN: Could you go to high school here?

KA: (There was) no high school on Moloka'i (at that time).

WN: And what high school was this?

KA: Farrington High.

WN: Why Farrington?

KA: (That) was the district I lived in on Liliha Street. On the (right-)hand side [traveling *makai*], if you lived on Liliha Street, all the students on that side went to Farrington High School, high school students. All the ones on the [left] side went to McKinley High School.

WN: And who was living on Liliha? Who did you live with?

KA: I lived with my half sister. My father's daughter with his first wife.

WN: Did you want to go to high school?

KA: Oh yes. If I stayed on Moloka'i, there was no high school and I just went as far as the ninth grade at Ho'olehua and that was it.

WN: Did you have any idea of what you wanted to do?

KA: Well, I wanted to be a nurse, but my family was very poor, my mother was a widow. So, I didn't take solid subjects in school, which was a mistake. If I had took solid subjects, then I can go to the UH. I was short a foreign language, which was required those days, two years, and algebra I took for only one year. I didn't take the solid subjects, so I couldn't go to the University of Hawai'i. But I wanted to be a nurse, and that meant that I have to go back to school again. But I wasn't happy living with family. So I came back to Moloka'i and I worked at the Shingle Memorial for a little while, then I went back.

WN: Oh, [Shingle] Memorial Hospital . . .

KA: Hospital at Ho'olehua.

WN: And then you went back to Honolulu?

KA: I went back to Honolulu.

WN: So, this is after you graduated, you went to Shingle?

KA: Yes, in 1939.

WN: And what did you do there?

KA: At the Shingle Hospital? Like a nurse's aide. Moloka'i, I was young at that time, and no fun, so I decided to go back to Honolulu. So I worked at Lunalilo Home for a little while.

WN: Doing what?

KA: Nurse's aide. And then the war came on in 1941, and then in 1942 I went to work for the navy yard [i.e., Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard].

WN: Now backing up just a little bit, when you came to Honolulu to go to school, was it really

different to you?

KA: Well, it was different because we had no street lights, no electricity on Moloka'i, and it [Honolulu] was fast to me. Not compared like now, you know, Honolulu is over crowded. I liked Honolulu, there's more to do and you young and there's more places to go to. I was sort of used to city life.

WN: Like what kinds of things did you do in Honolulu?

KA: Well, when I was there I used to skate a lot down Pier 14, I love to skate.

WN: Oh, they had a rink over there?

KA: Oh yes, they had a big skating rink over there, so I used to go skating a lot. I love to skate.

WN: Did you know how to skate before?

KA: I learned how to skate in a skating rink. (Chuckles)

WN: Pier 14, where is that?

KA: Pier 14 is on the waterfront by, let's see now. . . . You know where the old police station is, what's the name of that street? And, down that, the waterfront right down there?

WN: Old police station? On Bethel?

KA: (Yes), Bethel Street, right down that section. I think you walk straight down and that's Pier 14. That's where the boats used to come in from the outside islands, like *Wai'ale'ale* and, I forgot the other name of the boats. Boats that used to go from island to island . . .

WN: *Humu'ula*, there's the *Humu'ula*.

KA: *Humu'ula* used to land at another pier, but I remember *Wai'ale'ale*, and there was another boat that used to land over on that pier before. Then the planes started to, let me see now, when did the planes start to go? That's when the boats lost out, I think, or the war years came and then we had no boats running. I don't know what happened to the boats, can't remember. Maybe they were carrying troops.

WN: Maybe.

KA: I have no idea.

WN: When you left Moloka'i, who was still here in your family?

KA: Anita was here, but she [later] left to go to Honolulu to school. So nobody stayed with my mother.

WN: Your mother stayed 'Ualapu'e?

KA: (Yes), 'Ualapu'e. And she worked across, you know, they had a hospital over there. But they had shut down the hospital in 1935, and they had a smaller hospital [i.e., dispensary], used to be the doctor's home. So that was a small hospital.

WN: So when they shut down 'Ualapu'e [County] Hospital, where did the hospital move to?

KA: They had a little hospital [i.e., dispensary] right farther in on the right-hand side. Used to be the doctor's home.

WN: I mean did the main hospital move to Kaunakakai . . .

KA: To Ho'olehua.

WN: Oh, Ho'olehua [i.e., Shingle Memorial Hospital]. Okay, so when you worked at the navy yard, what was your job?

KA: Timekeeper.

WN: Timekeeper? What did a timekeeper do?

KA: Well, a timekeeper kept track of all the employees. They all had numbers and we had to check on them when they came in. Some, they worked around the clock, so we had to check on the time, and they all had time cards where they punch in. So, we had about maybe 150 employees, so we had two timekeepers. We had to send in the time. Some were required to work eight hours, some twelve hours, but some of them came in early. If they were allowed to work twelve hours, then we put them twelve hours. But if they were not allowed to work twelve hours, they were supposed to work [only] eight hours. But some of them came in early, they said, "Oh, I came in early, so I worked twelve hours," but you were not allowed to work twelve hours, you are only allowed to work eight hours. So we had a hard time with the Filipinos. (Chuckles) They punch in early and then stay for twelve hours, they wanted to get paid for twelve hours. So we know, more or less, who's supposed to work eight hours, who supposed to work for twelve hours.

WN: How much did you get paid?

KA: When I first worked there, they were not taking out tax. I was getting \$60 every two weeks, \$120 a month. And then, well, the longer you worked there, the farthest I went to was \$220 a month. And then after that, we were told that we were supposed to pay for our federal taxes and our territorial tax. But they still paid us the same amount. I remember going to the tax office in Honolulu and paying my territorial taxes, the territorial taxes, I forgot how much I have to pay. And then for the federal tax, we have to file in and pay tax for the whole year.

WN: How come they didn't deduct it from . . .

KA: From the pay? I don't know why, I haven't got the slightest idea. But when we file in our taxes we have to pay for the whole year.

WN: Well, we still have to pay taxes . . .

KA: (Chuckles). That's right too, but now it's all taken out, you know? That makes it easier instead of you paying it for the whole year. And was so funny, too, those days, they sent me a warning because I didn't pay my territorial taxes. It just happens that I paid it on Moloka'i. When I went to the tax office, I showed them my receipt and I said, "I paid my taxes on Moloka'i."

They said, "Oh, I didn't know Moloka'i had a tax office."

(Laughter)

WN: Tax offices was right here ['Ualapu'e], right?

KA: No, no, tax office was down Kaunakakai, because they had moved the tax office. The tax office and the courthouse was moved in 1935.

WN: Oh, everything was moved from [where] Kilohana School [is today] to . . .

KA: They had the same courthouse that they have now, that building. Everything was moved down Kaunakakai. They moved that whole building in a day's time.

WN: Really?

KA: (Yes), they did.

WN: So what, just one building they moved?

KA: One building, the courthouse and the tax office, and that's it.

WN: And then the main Kilohana School building today . . .

KA: You see, that was the hospital, but they had the school at Kalua'aha School and then they had moved some of the buildings, and connected on to the hospital [building] over here.

WN: Oh, I see. So, and while you were working at Pearl Harbor, you were still living with your . . .

KA: No, I went to live with my uncle and I paid him fifty dollars a month for rent.

WN: Where was this?

KA: Down Waikīkī by Hamohamo Road, with Emma [Kaawakauo].

WN: How did you like living over there?

KA: Oh, I liked living over there, that was my mother's brother [Elias Kaawakauo]. They were Hawaiians. And my aunty was a schoolteacher and my uncle was working for the *Honolulu Advertiser*.

WN: Who was your uncle and aunty, what was their names?

KA: My aunty was Emma Kaawakauo and my uncle was Elias.

WN: Oh yeah, yeah. That's right.

KA: I spoke to Emma [Kaawakauo, daughter of Elias and Emma Kaawakauo, and KA's cousin], Emma says she knows you.

WN: How is she?

KA: She's all right.

WN: Yeah, so there were like the Ewalikos and the Bishaws living there.

KA: (Yes), Ewalikos. [Dr. Richard] Kekuni [Blaisdell] is related to them. Kekuni's mother and my aunty are first cousins. That's how long I knew Kekuni. We all used to go swimming down Waikīkī Beach.

WN: Okay, so then, in '45, you came back to Moloka'i.

KA: I came back to Moloka'i.

WN: Why did you come back?

KA: Well, (it was) about time I come back. (Laughs) Getting to be settled, you know what I mean? I rested for a little while, then there was an opening at the ['Ualapu'e] Dispensary for a clerk typist. I took the test and I passed the test. So, I worked up there and, well, easy living on Moloka'i. And so I worked up there until I had my last baby in 1952. Hard to get baby-sitter, although I went back to work in 1953, but I said, that's no place for a mama to--- a mama supposed to stay home take care her children.

WN: Okay, so, first of all, I want to ask you why did you feel that you had to come back?

KA: This is my home.

WN: Well, I thought since you were having such a good time in Honolulu. (Laughs)

KA: Well, I think I had enough good time. It's about time I settled down (chuckles).

WN: So did you know all the time that you were eventually going to come back?

KA: Oh yes. I think people that come from Moloka'i, their thoughts are always home and sooner or later, later on in years, I find the people that was in Honolulu want to come home. And then Honolulu was getting crowded, it started to get crowded because of the war years, and you get to like your home. Your thoughts are always at home, you know.

WN: Well, some people stay in Honolulu because of the jobs. And I know, you probably took a

cut in pay, right, to come back here.

KA: Oh yes, oh yes. I took a cut in pay. In fact, when I came back here, my pay was only \$145 a month, that's all. But I didn't care, because when you live in Honolulu, what you want, you have to get it in the market. Like over here, you can go to the beach. And there's plenty food, and you have fruit trees in your yard, and this is a better living. I know my children want to come back someday. I have two boys in Honolulu, so I didn't think about selling the place. I subdivided the place so everybody have a share, because this is their home. When they want to come back, well, there's a home for them.

WN: Well, they're lucky.

KA: They lucky. One of the boys, Moku's son wanted to come back here, but he said he have to ask his wife, the wife is a city girl. But he said, "I want to come back to Moloka'i and live," and I don't know what happened. This is about a year ago that he was here and he was talking to me, he said that he wants to come back and live on Moloka'i.

WN: So when you came back here in '45, where did you live?

KA: I lived with my mother.

WN: Your mother, oh, right here then.

KA: (Yes), right here.

WN: So was you and your mom.

KA: Then after that I got married.

WN: How did you meet your husband [William Masao Akutagawa, Sr.]?

KA: I knew my husband all my life.

WN: Oh, that's right. Did you know, while you were in Honolulu, that you would marry him?

KA: Well, when I was young, I had a crush on him. (Laughs) In fact, he came to pick me up when I was nine years old to go to his going-away party. (Laughs)

WN: I'm wondering, he's Japanese, you're part Hawaiian. Was there anybody who said you shouldn't get married or anything?

KA: Well, his mother agreed on us getting married. But his father didn't like the idea because he wanted his son to marry a Japanese girl. (Laughs)

WN: Yeah, Japanese are like that, you know.

KA: Oh yes, but now, nationality doesn't make any difference.

WN: Okay, so you worked at the dispensary here. What did you do?

KA: Well, I typed up all the reports. I did all the typing and then I helped the doctor. The doctor was here for half a day and then he had his office down Kaunakakai part of the time. And after he left, I made all the reports. Like, I used to take an inventory of the medicines that we'd need and I used to give the doctor the list of the medications because we had salespeople coming in from Honolulu. So what we didn't have here, the doctor said, well, order this, order that.

WN: Did you do any kind of nurse-type of work, medical work?

KA: Well, you have to. (Chuckles) Sometimes we had emergencies where I have to be in with the doctor, you know, like maternity cases, I've seen a couple. They couldn't get to the—wasn't Shingle that time, they had changed the name at Ho'olehua to Moloka'i [General] Hospital, I think. So if they didn't get there in time, they knew they were expecting now, the babies have to be delivered over here, so I have to be in with the doctor, I have to act like a nurse.

WN: Did you like that?

KA: Oh yes. I liked that. I didn't mind it at all. We did lots of minor surgeries, too.

WN: So there was no full-time nurse?

KA: No, no full-time nurse, I was just like—although my title was a clerk, junior clerk typist, I was to assist the doctor, too, in case it came to an emergency. So, wasn't hard.

WN: So from when they moved everything over to Kaunakakai [in 1935] and there was only a dispensary, were they using that same building?

KA: They were using the doctor's home. The doctor's home was converted into a hospital and then after that was a dispensary, where we see only outpatients. But, it became an emergency [facility] in case there was an emergency.

WN: And that [present Kilohana] School building, what was that before?

KA: The school building was the [larger] hospital before.

WN: Oh, I see.

KA: But it wasn't that big, it's just added on from Kalua'aha School.

WN: So, that building was once the hospital, then they moved it out to the doctor's home?

KA: Doctor's home. 'Cause the population was not even 500 on this side, from maybe Kamalō to Hālawa. I don't think our population could be more than that.

WN: From Kamalō on, they usually came here ['Ualapu'e] . . .

KA: They came here.

WN: I see. So you got to be a nurse. That's what you wanted to be.

KA: Oh yes. (Chuckles) I wasn't a nurse, but I had to assist the doctor. (Laughs)

WN: Who was the doctor?

KA: I worked under, let me see now, three doctors. Dr. Francis (K. Chu), Dr. Sau Ki (Wong), and I worked underneath Paul Stevens. And of course, when Paul Stevens wasn't there, there was other doctors too, like Dr. Reppun, I forgot, he's at Castle [Memorial] Hospital.

WN: Was it Fred Reppun?

KA: Could be.

WN: Kāne'ohe yeah?

KA: Mmm hmm. (Yes). And there was Dr. Heater, I forgot his first name, and Dr. Butler. The county had built another cottage for the doctors to live out here. And when they went on vacations, doctors from Kaunakakai and Maunaloa took over.

WN: So, Maunaloa doctor was plantation, yeah?

KA: (Yes), plantation. But all their patients were sent to Moloka'i [General] Hospital.

WN: What about dental services? Was Dr. [Arthur] Chu over here?

KA: Dr. Chu was in Kaunakakai. And then we had a doctor that came from Maui, Dr. (Theodore) Behrmann. He came here once a week and his office was in the dispensary.

WN: He was a dentist?

KA: (Yes), he was a dentist. Then we had Dr. Fujimoto, I think, that came from Lāna'i, in Kaunakakai. He came once a week, he came on his private plane from Lāna'i.

WN: So when you came here in '45, were there any changes here from the time . . .

KA: No. (Tape inaudible) in 1950, that's when the electricity came up here.

WN: How did you manage without electricity after being used to electricity in Honolulu?

KA: Well, I loved it. (Laughs) I still have my lamps. Very seldom electricity goes off, but I still burn my lamps . . .

WN: Kerosene lamps?

KA: (Yes), kerosene lamps. I have them here, I have them there, in the other house.

WN: What about any physical changes to the area?

KA: Well, we have more homes now, you know, and, well, I think we going to have more homes in the future over here.

WN: Was Harry Apo still caretaker of the pond when you came back after the war? (Tape inaudible.)

KA: (Yes), he was still caretaker of the pond. I don't know what year he gave up, I can't remember.

WN: Okay. In 1946 there was a tidal wave . . .

KA: Yes.

WN: . . . in this area, what do you remember about that?

KA: Well, I was working at the dispensary and I didn't go out to look at what had happened, but there were some children. The East end from Kainalu up, I think, was hit badly and so one baby had no clothes. So I gave lot of things away.

WN: But 'Ualapu'e wasn't affected?

KA: Oh no. Not at all. Because our reef is way outside, it didn't affect us. It only affected maybe from Kainalu up. I think it affected them because the blue ocean is there. I didn't have the time to go and look. I think Billy [Akutagawa] has some pictures of the tidal wave. I got some pictures from my friend Jeff.

WN: So Kainalu, Waialua, Hālawā were affected?

KA: Yeah, Waialua and all that area, you know . . .

WN: Kalaupapa, too?

KA: Kalaupapa, too. I believe Kalaupapa and, let's see, oh, let me take this back. The Hustace [Ka'opeaHina] Pond, the tidal wave came over and came into their property.

WN: This was the Hitchcock Pond?

KA: (Yes), Hitchcock's Pond.

WN: Some people told me that the reason why there's not clams at 'Ualapu'e anymore is because of the tidal wave.

KA: That's what they said? But I told you no. It's because of the 'ala'eke, that blue crab.

WN: Yeah, you're sticking to your story. (Laughs)

- KA: (Yes), I'm sticking to my story. I don't know, I might be wrong. You know why? Because I found all those clams, all the shells, cracked. And I really think because they had Samoan crab in here. Oh yes, when I was working for the dispensary, Harry Apo, in 1946, he still had this pond. They had the big Samoan crabs inside there, and he used to let me go and pick up clams in there. Then I seen all the shells eaten up, so I really think it's this *'ala'eke*, I might be wrong.
- WN: Do you remember from when you left to go Honolulu and when you came back, was there any difference in the number of clams?
- KA: We still had some more.
- WN: Still had in '46?
- KA: We still had some. Let me see now, in 1952, we didn't have clams over here, but they had it up Yoshimura's pond, because I went up there and I asked Mrs. Yoshimura if I can. That's the Buchanan Pond [Kūpeke Fishpond] I'm talking about. I remember so well because I was *hāpai* with my last baby.
- WN: Hmm. Maybe the clams moved east?
- KA: Well, all the ponds had clams, Hitchcock's Pond too had, and Buchanan's, and this pond [*'Ualapu'e*] I remember.
- WN: What about Jones [Nī'aupala Fishpond]?
- KA: Oh Jones. Mm hmm. So, I'm still sticking to my story. What did the other Hawaiians have to say? They said because of the tidal wave?
- WN: Well, some people were saying it was because they thought it was some kind of a disease, some said tidal wave, I'm not sure who said what. But that's the three stories I've heard: your story, tidal wave, and some disease.
- KA: Oh, I see.
- WN: Probably never know for sure. So Harry Apo was still caretaker in 1945?
- KA: (Yes), in 1946.
- WN: Forty-six, I'm sorry.
- KA: 'Cause somebody got bitten in the pond on the finger. They went to get clams and they came to the dispensary, so did we stitch up the finger? I kind of forget now.
- WN: At the dispensary, did you have other cases related to the fish pond like . . .
- KA: Barracuda, like that?

WN: Yeah, *kakā*?

KA: *Kakā*, gee. I think we had one that was hit by the barracuda. I think it was Mrs. Yoshimura, on her back. I'm scared of that fish. Dangerous, you know. My sister got hit in this pond. She was standing on the pond and she got hit.

WN: On the wall?

KA: On the wall, was high tide, and she got poked in the back.

WN: This is Anita?

KA: No, Leone.

WN: I heard Zelig [Duvauchelle] Sherwood got hit, too.

KA: Oh yeah?

WN: Or one of the [other] Duvauchelle girls.

KA: Oh, I see. Anna [Duvauchelle Goodhue] was telling you this, she got hit.

WN: Was it Anna who told me or Laura [Duvauchelle Smith]? It was one of the two.

KA: Oh, you met Laura?

WN: Yeah, I met Laura, too. And Henry [Duvauchelle].

KA: Oh, and Henry.

WN: Okay, I think I asked you this before, but do you know when Harry Apo died or stopped being caretaker of the pond? Was it in the '50s?

KA: Fifties, gee. No.

WN: But after he was gone there was nobody here to take care.

KA: I can't remember. I don't remember anybody taking care the pond. Because people went in there, drag the pond. There's no caretaker. Until [George] Peabody came along [Peabody leased 'Ualapu'e Fishpond in the 1980s], then he asked to lease the pond.

WN: Did you notice any big differences between the time Harry Apo took care of the pond and when he didn't take care of the pond?

KA: To me, when nobody took care of the pond was better than when Peabody got the lease of the pond. When he got the lease of the pond he was using the pond for his own purpose. Like that windsurfing. And then he was raising ducks in there.

WN: You know, your son Billy and other people are working to restore the pond. What are your feelings towards that?

KA: I think it's a good idea. I like to see the results. Keep them as a treasure, you know. He [pond caretaker William "Tubz" Kalipi, Jr.] has Hawaiian blood and maybe by talking to all the Hawaiians he can learn. Well, we have to see what happens.

WN: It's important to you that the people working on it are Hawaiian?

KA: Oh yes, but makes no difference if other people are of other nationalities, that's fine. They don't have to be Hawaiian, can be any other nationality. I like to see the outcome of the pond after it's ready. I haven't been down there to look around, to see what they doing. So we have to see what happens.

WN: What do you feel they have to do to make it successful?

KA: Just take care the pond. We see what happens, take time before we see results.

WN: [Thank you] very much.

KA: Yeah, you're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW

‘UALAPU‘E, MOLOKA‘I

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